

**To:** Principals of the Consent Decree

Dan Kimball, Acting Superintendent, Everglades National Park  
Mark Musaus, Manager, A.R.M. Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge  
Col. Robert Carpenter, District Engineer, Jacksonville District, Army Corps of Engineers  
David Struhs, Secretary, Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
Henry Dean, Executive Director, South Florida Water Management District

**From:** Garth Redfield, Chair, Technical Oversight Committee

On behalf of the TOC Representatives:  
Garth Redfield, South Florida Water Management District  
Frank Nearhoof, Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
Nicholas Aumen, Everglades National Park  
Mike Waldon, A.R.M. Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge  
Paul DuBoway, Jacksonville District, Army Corps of Engineers

**Copy:** Colleen Castille, Secretary (2/27/04), Florida Department of Environmental Protection

**Date:** February 19, 2004

**Re:** Progress on TOC prioritization of recommendations concerning the Refuge

**Background:** The Technical Oversight Committee (TOC) provided eight recommendations (Attachment 1) to Principals of the Consent Decree on July 24, 2003. These consensus recommendations were "...to assist us in gaining a scientific understanding of historic and future exceedances and to decrease the likelihood of future exceedances." In response to TOC's recommendations, the Principals directed in their 12/17/03 letter that TOC establish priorities, cost estimates and preliminary assignment of responsibilities, and provide additional details more fully describing the recommendations. The Principals also suggested that TOC consider the interplay of the recommendations with projects in the Long-Term Plan for Achieving Water Quality Goals. This message was requested by TOC to provide a brief update to the Principals on recent and projected progress on the recommendations.

**Recent Progress:** TOC met on January 8, 2004 and February 3, 2004 and discussed the recommendations at length. Recommendations concerning the control of phosphorus were addressed in a presentation by District staff summarizing water quality projects in the Long-Term Plan addressing TOC recommendations. A presentation was given to the TOC by the Refuge staff on a monitoring and modeling plan. Following the meeting, the Refuge provided a written plan detailing proposed activities. Products from these efforts can be found on the TOC website: <http://www.sfwmd.gov/org/ema/toc/index.html> .

**Near-Term Activities:** The TOC requested more frequent meetings to expedite the prioritization process. In response, District staff have arranged for special TOC meetings on March 2, April 6, June 22 and July 27, 2004. Quarterly TOC meetings have also been scheduled for May 25 and August 26, 2004.

TOC Representatives have agreed to provide the Principals with a report on the prioritization progress following the April 6, 2004 meeting. Please contact your agency's TOC Representative for additional information.

## **Attachment 1**

### **Recommendations to Principals of the Consent Decree (July 24, 2003)**

#### **A. Controlling Phosphorus Loads to the Refuge**

1. Continue to develop and implement strategies to operate the STAs within their design range. That should include review of baseline hydrologic data sets used for STA design and updating to reflect current regional water management.
2. Review the long-term plan to determine whether additional measures are appropriate for optimizing phosphorus reduction. Implement such measures as necessary to achieve the long-term levels.
3. Refine operational strategies to reduce short-term peak loads to and from the STAs.
4. Review of regional water management decisions affecting STA operations and performance.

#### **B. Enhancing Monitoring of the Refuge**

1. Design and implement an enhanced monitoring program to improve spatial and temporal understanding of factors related to phosphorus dynamics.

#### **C. Modeling of the Refuge**

1. Develop a water quality/hydraulic model for the Refuge with a phosphorus cycling component.
2. Evaluate issues associated with phosphorus loads and transports within the L-40 and L-7 canals.
3. Develop and track a simple phosphorus mass-balance for the Refuge.